

## Winter 2007

The *School Food Services News* is published three times per year (fall, winter and spring) and is available on the School Food Services Web page.

# NEWS

## School Food Services

### Inside this issue

- 2 • School Performance and a Healthy Breakfast

Get Online

National School Breakfast Week: March 5-9, 2007

- 3 • Parent and Student Involvement in the Local Wellness Policy

- 4 • Local Wellness Policy Grant Recipients

### Click here to contact our staff:

<http://www.dese.mo.gov/divadm/food/staff.html>



## Districts of Excellence

Congratulations to **Nancy Coughenour**, director of Food Services of Raytown C-2 School District, and **Martha Meyer**, director of Food Services of St. Joseph School District, for achieving the School Nutrition Association's District of Excellence in Child Nutrition status. Coughenour, Meyer and their food service staff are to be commended for their time and commitment in providing nutritious, kid-friendly meals to their student customers.

Keys to Excellence is an online evaluation, management and learning tool that food service directors can use to rate their programs and compare them to districts nationwide. The District of Excellence distinction is given to Child Nutrition programs that display superior performance in providing nutritious meals for students in a healthy educational environment. This high level of achievement demonstrates knowledge of nutrition, nutrition education, communications, marketing, administration and operations.

Keys to Excellence was developed and produced by the School Nutrition Association and the Child Nutrition Foundation, with the support from the USDA's Nutrition and Consumer Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Division of Adolescent and School Health, and the National Dairy Council. To learn more about this tool, please visit <http://www.schoolnutrition.org/KEYS.aspx?ID=1158>.



## School Nutrition Association Annual National Conference (ANC) 2007

Mark your calendars for ANC 2007 Chicago, July 15-18, 2007, and get ready for "My Kind of Conference." ANC offers Child Nutrition program updates, exhibits, a marketplace, educational sessions, inspirational speakers and much more in the beautiful, cultural and historic city of Chicago. For more information, visit the School Nutrition Association ANC Web site at <http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/meetingsandevents/anc2007>.

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## School Performance and a Healthy Breakfast



Children are like cars. Just as cars need fuel to get from one place to another, children need fuel in the form of calories and nutrients in order to get through the day. A child's fuel tank is empty after a long night of sleep,

and breakfast is the fuel that refills the empty tank. Without proper nutrition in the morning, children might not perform well mentally or physically while in school.

Research shows that children who do not eat in the morning become tired and have short attention spans. Susan E. Bagwell conducted a study at Loyola University New Orleans that compared the test scores of children. The children who did not eat breakfast scored lower than those who had a morning meal. Children who skip breakfast tend to be more sluggish and less attentive, and they have less energy to carry out their morning activities. These children also tend to eat more foods high in fat and sugar and low in nutritional value because these foods are convenient and the children are often hungry.

A balanced breakfast is important because it helps improve mental performance and concentration during morning activities. Breakfast can have a positive effect on alertness, attention, performance on standardized tests and other skills important to academic success. It helps children meet their nutrient needs, which in turn ensures optimal growth and development.

Despite all of its benefits, not all children eat breakfast in the morning. There are multiple reasons why children might skip breakfast from not liking breakfast foods to socioeconomic factors. Whatever the reasons, they can be overcome by educating communities on the benefits of morning meals and through initiatives such as the School Breakfast Program.



### MSNA Web Site

The School Food Services Web site is linked to the Missouri School Nutrition Association (MSNA) (formerly known as Missouri School Food Service Association, or MSFSA) Web site. Check Additional Sites of Interest at the bottom of our home page. For more information about MSNA, logon to <http://www.msfsa.net>.

### National Food Service Management Institute

Every year the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) presents satellite seminars in April and October and live interactive teleconferences in January and August. Check the link on our home page under Additional Sites of Interest. The NFSMI Web address is <http://www.nfsmi.org>. Click on Educational Opportunities for satellite seminar information.

### Resource Materials

Check out the newest resource information under our Resource button at <http://www.dese.mo.gov/divadm/food>:

- St. Louis Dairy Council
- Midwest Dairy Association
- Missouri Coordinated School Health Coalition

## National School Breakfast Week: March 5-9, 2007



"A World of School Breakfasts"

is the 2007 National School Breakfast Week (NSBW) theme. Travel the globe to create a variety of exciting international menus. NSBW provides a unique opportunity to combine geography, social studies and nutrition education. Encourage your students to power up with a good breakfast before taking a trip to a far-away land in their learning. Eating a well-balanced breakfast from far-reaching lands is a great way to start an education day. For more information and recipe ideas, visit <http://docs.schoolnutrition.org/meetingsandevents/nsbw2007>.

## Parent and Student Involvement in the Local Wellness Policy



After the implementation of local wellness policies throughout Missouri's schools, the State Agency has received abundant feedback from parents, students (indirectly through parents) and local education agencies (LEAs). The feedback has been predominately positive. However, there appears to be some opposition between LEAs and parents/students regarding some of the changes LEAs have opted to make for their specific populations. Although there is general consensus about the need to focus on student wellness, some responses indicate a belief that the rights of children have been infringed upon. At the same time, many LEAs indicate that parents and students do not care about and/or do not understand this attempt to improve the overall health of children. Both sides are clearly interested in children's health. Where is the disconnection? It might be due to a lack of communication.

Part of the new USDA local wellness policy mandate for participants in federally funded Child Nutrition programs is to include parent and student involvement. This aspect of community involvement is a key component to the efforts of LEAs in improving and promoting the health and well being of their students. The

local wellness policy should remain a fluid document to meet the changing needs of the community. In order to reflect local priorities, there should be an exchange of ideas and information between the LEA and the community.

### Benefits of involving students and parents in the local wellness policy:

- fosters communication and education on both sides.
- teaches students to make realistic choices. \*
- encourages students to list goals, find adult allies and anticipate barriers. \*
- shows students how to engage in decision making, the communication of ideas, the delegation of responsibilities and asking for help when needed. \*
- solidifies school rules and activities in the home environment.
- decreases parental conflict and student violations of the rules and policies.
- makes it is easier for parents and students to support and accept changes.
- provides valuable feedback from community members in order to address emerging issues and to keep the local wellness policy up to date.
- provides multiple talking points and fosters increased communication in the household.

*(continued on page 4)*

**Part of the new USDA local wellness policy mandate for participants in federally funded Child Nutrition programs is to include parent and student involvement.**



(continued from page 3)

### How to involve parents and students in a productive manner

- Invite parents to lunch to promote a wellness theme.
- Provide brochures to parents and students explaining the necessary changes.
- Determine how you want students and parents to be involved, and define their role up front.
- Respect student knowledge of the target audience. \*
- Give students ownership of specific tasks. \*
- Consider involving a number of students (not just one) on your team; kids work well within a group of peers. \*
- Recognize the students, the school and the wellness committee for their involvement. \*
- Send letters home to parents.
- Utilize teachers who are also parents to act as liaisons within the wellness committee.

- Use health fairs for parents and students to promote wellness and solicit support; invite committee members.

Ask parents and students to be a part of changes that enhance a healthy student environment. Changes will run much smoother if you have community support. This could mean a sharp difference between gaining advocacy or opposition. Educate and accept feedback from parents and students about how school systems work so that the changes are realistic, effective and lasting.

\* Taken from two field reports published by Action for Healthy Kids: "Giving Kids the Voice of Authority: Engaging Students in the Fight Against Child Obesity," and "Tapping Into the Power: Engaging Parents in the Fight Against Obesity." Download both reports at [http://actionforhealthykids.org/special\\_exclusive.php](http://actionforhealthykids.org/special_exclusive.php).

## Local Wellness Policy Grant Recipients

Congratulations to the following eight LEAs for receiving additional funding to promote the implementation of their local wellness policy: Columbia Public Schools, Kennett 39, North Harris R-III, Hickman Mills C-1, Lafayette C-1, Lexington R-V, Smithton R-VI, and Sedalia 200.

Each LEA will be using the funding in different ways to increase the number of opportunities for students to eat fruits and vegetables, to engage in physical activities and/or nutrition education activities, to increase the number of organized walking and/or physical activity programs in the school, to increase the number of families that include fruits and vegetables in their diets, and to increase the number of families that access opportunities for physical activity. These LEAs have taken a vested interest in the health and well-being of their students.



### The Local Wellness Policy:

- Reaches beyond USDA-funded meal programs to influence children's health
- Acknowledges local community responsibility to support or build on government efforts
- Provides an opportunity for school districts to create an environment conducive to healthy lifestyle choices
- Recognizes the critical role of schools in curbing the epidemic of childhood overweight and obesity.